

Exhibit 6

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A CONTINUING EXAMINATION OF CIVIL RIGHTS SERVICES AND
DIVERSITY IN THE COAST GUARD

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(111-43)

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

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[GRAPHICS NOT AVAILABLE IN TIFF FORMAT]

HEARING ON A CONTINUING EXAMINATION OF CIVIL RIGHTS SERVICES AND
DIVERSITY IN THE COAST GUARD

Thursday, June 18, 2009,

House of Representatives,
Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime
Transportation,
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:37 a.m., in Room 2167, Rayburn House Office Building, the Honorable Elijah E. Cummings [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Mr. Cummings. The Subcommittee will come to order. Let me first of all say we were trying to make sure we did not run into super schedule problems by starting the hearing and then having a big pause. As it has turned out, the best plans don't always work. It appears that we are going to have a vote in about 20 minutes, maybe 30, but we should be able to move this hearing along with perhaps one break.

The Subcommittee convenes today to continue its examination of civil rights services in the Coast Guard and of the Coast Guard's diversity initiatives. I note this hearing is being conducted as one of several hearings that meet the oversight requirements under clauses 2(n), (o), and (p) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

In April, I convened the Subcommittee to consider the Coast Guard's provision of civil rights services to its military and civilian workforce and to applicants for employment following the release of a report on the service's equal employment opportunity programs written by Booz Allen Hamilton.

The Booz Allen Hamilton report was simply scathing. Among other criticisms, the Booz Allen Hamilton team found that: one, the Coast Guard's civil rights program did not fully protect confidential personal information; two, the service did not conduct thorough analyses of barriers to equal opportunity in employment or develop specific plans to break these barriers down; three, the service had a number of inadequately trained service providers who could not ensure the complaints management process was in full compliance with regulatory requirements.

We also learned, after subsequent examination, that virtually none of these findings was new. Almost all of these criticisms had been identified--sometimes repeatedly--in previous third-party assessments of the Coast Guard Civil Rights Program and in the Coast Guard's own, their own self-assessments.

During the course of our April hearing, the Coast Guard indicated that six new positions had been assigned to the Office of Civil Rights. The Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Ms. Terri Dickerson, stated she could have these positions filled by June 15th, and I promised that the Subcommittee would reconvene after June 15th to receive an update on the progress made by the Coast Guard in filling these positions and in strengthening the provision of civil rights services. Ladies and gentlemen, that promise is kept by the convening of this hearing today.

During our last hearing, Ms. Dickerson also indicated that a number of plans were being developed and were poised for implementation to respond to the many shortcomings identified in the Coast Guard's civil rights services. Initial reports indicate that significant progress has been made. I note that yesterday, the Coast Guard announced that civil rights service providers will now be full-time employees who will receive standardized training and who will report directly to the Office of Civil Rights. We applaud the long overdue professionalization of the Coast Guard's civil rights services. The announcement was welcomed.

Finally, Ranking Member LoBiondo and I agreed that we would ask the Government Accountability Office to submit to the Subcommittee by next April the results of an assessment of the Coast Guard's effort to strengthen the management of its Equal Employment Opportunity and Equal Opportunity programs.

I report today that Ranking Member LoBiondo and I, together with the Chairman of the Full Committee, Congressman Oberstar, and the Ranking Member of the Full Committee, have written and made that request. Our staffs have now met with representatives of the GAO, and the GAO is formulating its research plan at the present time and intends to present findings to the Subcommittee next April, as requested.

I say this to emphasize that our oversight of the Coast Guard's civil rights programs will not end today. I also say it because I want to make it very clear that this is a bipartisan effort. It is not a Republican effort, it is not a Democratic effort; it is an American effort. Today's hearing is just

another installment of what will continue to be an active oversight process. I remind you that this is our watch. This is our watch. Our goal is ensuring that the Coast Guard achieves and sustains a model EEO program for civilian employees and a model EO program for members of the military.

During our April hearing, we also examined the initiatives that the Coast Guard is undertaking to expand diversity throughout its ranks. We have been particularly concerned about the diversity at the Coast Guard Academy.

In May, the Coast Guard Academy's Class of 2009 graduated. Out of a class of 225 students, there were, according to data provided by the Coast Guard, 24 minorities. In that were included 10 Asians, 9 Hispanics, 4 African Americans and 1 Native American. Additional data provided by the Coast Guard show that the incoming Class of 2013 is expected to begin with 288 students, of whom 44 will be minorities, meaning that minorities will comprise approximately 15 percent of the incoming class. Of those students, Hispanic Americans will comprise nearly 9 percent of the incoming class and African Americans students will comprise 2 percent of the incoming class.

I serve as a member of the Board of Visitors on the Naval Academy Board. Earlier this month, the Naval Academy announced that its Class of 2013 will be the most diverse class in the institution's history, with 35 percent of the class of incoming midshipmen being minorities. In other words, the Naval Academy's Class of 2013 has more than double the number of incoming minority members as a percentage of the incoming class than the Coast Guard Academy's Class of 2013 does. Further, this level of diversity in the Naval Academy's Class of 2013 represents an increase of approximately 7 percent over the percentage that minorities comprised of the incoming Class of 2012 last year.

The very top levels of the Navy's leadership in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations have recognized that diversity is not a problem to be managed but, rather, a promise to be realized. Our Nation's diversity is one of our greatest strengths. And, to ensure that it can harness this strength to accomplish its missions in service to our Nation, the Navy has set a clear objective of significantly increasing the diversity of its future senior leadership, and it is holding its current senior leadership directly accountable for their contributions to the achievement of this objective.

To that end, I might add that I am joining with Chairman Bennie Thompson, Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, to write the President and the Secretary of Homeland Security asking that when they appoint a new admiral to head up the Coast Guard, that they make sure that that person is sensitive to these issues. It might start at the beginning at the top. I note that Admiral Allen had done an outstanding job, but we must now build upon what he has done.

In pursuit of the Navy's overall diversity objectives, the United States Naval Academy has implemented a comprehensive effort to break down any barriers that its old recruiting methods may have thrown in the way of achievement of its inclusion goals and has initiated new efforts targeted to reach potential students in every corner of this Nation. This effort has been led by the Dean of Admissions at the Naval Academy, Stephen B. Latta, who will testify today. I emphasize that he is here specifically to share with the Subcommittee how the Naval Academy has achieved its stunning successes. And one of the reasons why we invited him here is because we wanted to show that it can be done. It can be done.

The experience of the United States Naval Academy demonstrates beyond a shadow of a doubt that where there is a

will to expand diversity, diversity will expand. The Coast Guard is moving decisively to ensure that its civil rights services guarantee equal opportunity to all. Like the Navy, the Coast Guard must also take specific and aggressive steps to ensure that it can harness the strength of our Nation's diversity by ensuring that its leadership pipeline reflects that diversity.

Finally, it is frankly past time for the Coast Guard to move to define comprehensive, service-wide diversity objectives and to require each member and unit of the service, including the Academy, to contribute to the achievement of these objectives.

With that, I now recognize our distinguished Ranking Member, Congressman LoBiondo.

Mr. LoBiondo. Good morning and thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much. The Subcommittee is continuing its oversight of the Coast Guard's civil rights programs and the service's efforts to address issues related to diversity within its ranks.

Following our last meeting, I joined with Chairman Cummings to ask the Government Accountability Office to further examine the Coast Guard's Office of Civil Rights. While this work has just begun, I appreciate the Chairman's continued attention to these Coast Guard programs and how critical they are.

At our last hearing, we were told of several items the Coast Guard planned to take action on prior to this hearing. These items included hiring additional civil rights personnel, a centralization of the civil rights program, and the identification of proven measures that would improve the workplace climate and could be implemented in the near future. I look forward to receiving an update on progress that has been made on each of these items.

The Commandant has long voiced his interest in expanding the service's efforts to enhance the diversity of its military and civilian workforce. I support the Commandant's efforts to widen the scope of the Coast Guard's recruiting efforts to reach Americans of all races and in all regions of our country. The Coast Guard must remain centered on the goal of bringing the most talented and qualified candidates to serve in the Coast Guard.

I am pleased the Dean of Admission of the Naval Academy will testify this morning on their approach to increased recruiting efforts to attract prospective midshipmen from non-traditional areas. I believe the Coast Guard Academy should examine the initiatives adopted by their sister academy and determine whether or not these or similar approaches should be considered in New London.

As I said at our last hearing, this Subcommittee stands ready to work with the Coast Guard to provide resources necessary to address these issues. Although we have not received any such requests to date, I hope the witnesses will include in their testimony whether additional resources or authorities are required at this time.

Once again, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for your leadership and I want to thank the witnesses for their continued efforts in this particular area.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you very much.

I ask unanimous consent that the Congressman Bennie Thompson, the Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, who shares this Subcommittee's deep concern about the Coast Guard's diversity initiatives and equal opportunity programs, and has been closely following our oversight efforts, may submit a statement for the record. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. Cummings. We are very pleased this morning to have back with us Ms. Terri Dickerson, who is Director of the Office of

Civil Rights with the Coast Guard, and Vice Admiral Clifford Pearson, who is Chief of Staff of the Coast Guard.

Ms. Dickerson, thank you very much for being with us, and we will now hear from you.

TESTIMONY OF TERRI A. DICKERSON, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD; AND VICE ADMIRAL CLIFFORD I. PEARSON, CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

Ms. Dickerson. Thank you, sir. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Committee. I am Terri Dickerson, Director of the Coast Guard's Office of Civil Rights. It is my pleasure to speak with you this morning again to report significant progress in the Coast Guard's Office of Civil Rights.

I would like to request that my written statement be entered into the record.

Mr. Cummings. So ordered.

Ms. Dickerson. Thank you.

During the April hearing, we discussed three topics: the current state of the Coast Guard's civil rights program; the strategies I had in place to act on recommendations resulting from a functional review; and, last, the benchmarks I am using to measure our progress. I am here to offer you evidence that Coast Guard has followed up on the many items we discussed.

First, action plans. In April I reported that we had subjected the 53 recommendations arising from the functional review to action plans with milestone dates which enabled detailed tracking. I stated that 10 of the 53 recommendations had been completed. In the ensuing two months, that number has grown from 10 to 29 recommendations now completed. In sum, all 53 actions are either in the planning stage, various phases of execution, or accomplished.

Your statements and actions, and those of Admiral Allen, have communicated a strong message to our workforce: that valid and properly resourced EEO processes are vital to mission execution. With the momentum you have inspired, we are on track to implement all remaining actions.

As to resources, Coast Guard has taken action. I am pleased to report that Coast Guard directed \$570,000 to emergent current year civil rights needs and authorized six new positions. I have filled all six positions. Consistent with the Coast Guard's mission, they represent facets of diversity by grade level, race, gender, national origin; that is, Black, Hispanic, Caucasian, Asian American, male and female. Three were from outside Coast Guard and three represent succession opportunities within.

Consistent with the preset that nothing substitutes for top leadership commitment, your strong support and that of Admiral Allen's for our Office's restructuring and level of resourcing are receiving service-wide support. I detected this during my visits over the past two months to five of the nine Coast Guard districts nationwide. At each I discussed the centralized EEO service delivery model, the functional review results, and strategic action plans. I am happy to report that personnel whom I have briefed are overwhelmingly pledging their strong support for our strategy going forward.

We have taken a giant step forward finalizing our restructuring proposal in that it has now been signed by the Commandant. I expect full implementation of the proposed restructuring by July, or as soon thereafter as union notifications and resulting issues are resolved.

In my visits to Coast Guard districts, I have met with command cadre, field level personnel, and other stakeholders, and have provided briefs to a wide range of audiences,

including all-hands gatherings. On Tuesday, I reported to the Commandant that the opportunity to explain the new structure, one locality at a time, is offering me feedback to improve and engendering strong support among those who are hearing it firsthand. They have agreed it reaches benchmarks for a process fused with integrity and I am extremely encouraged by the positive feedback.

Last, outcomes. Foremost, we will have a centrally run national program delivered by personnel trained in EEO statutes, regulations, guidance, policy, and instruction. This will foster consistency, better oversight, and faster and more reliable service. Our results will be evident in measures, including complaint processing timeliness, consistency of practices, prevention of unauthorized disclosures, and compliance with EEO requirements.

Coast Guard has been transparent in its move to a modern day civil rights program, keeping you informed of our intentions. In my correspondence with you last year, I reported my plan to conduct the review. When complete, I communicated the results of the review to you, the workforce, and the public, and I have sent you my plan of action, with milestone dates for completion. In another letter last month, I provided a progress update, and I am updating the workforce during my visits.

Mr. Chairman, the civil rights program is not only well on track with its goals and action plan. As you so eloquently and consistently remind us, this is our watch. Our journey from past day to the future one affords the opportunity for leadership and vision. I am proud to be the Director of the Coast Guard Civil Rights Program. I sense great momentum in our organization that I will continue to harness and drive toward becoming a model EEO program in the Federal Government.

Again, I thank you for this opportunity to testify today and I am happy to take your questions.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you very much, Ms. Dickerson.
Vice Admiral Clifford Pearson.

Admiral Pearson. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, distinguished Members of the Committee. I am Vice Admiral Clifford Pearson, Chief of Staff, U.S. Coast Guard, and it is a pleasure to be testifying on the service's diversity efforts. I ask that my written testimony be entered into the record.

Mr. Cummings. Without objection, so ordered.

Admiral Pearson. Mr. Chairman, the Coast Guard continues to build and sustain an organizational climate that embraces the potential and enhances the contributions of all of our employees by promoting inclusion, equality, and respect. We are taking aggressive action to promote the full awareness and full equal access to the entire spectrum of Coast Guard opportunities, and we want every American to know these opportunities exist.

To that end, we have established a clear and distinct vision: ``recruit, retain, and support a ready, capable, diverse, and high quality military and civilian workforce.'' The Coast Guard has completed the initial draft of a new diversity strategic plan that will be finalized by 1 September 2009. We look forward to sharing it with the Committee upon its completion.

This strategic plan will better define our diversity goals and performance objectives that cascade down from and underpin the Commandant's diversity policy statement. It explicitly focuses on five strategic goals: increased diversity through leadership accountability; improve total workforce cultural climate; expand outreach and marketing; provide equitable career opportunities for all employees; and optimize and education to understand the value of a diverse workforce.

This plan will also align with the Coast Guard Academy's strategy plan, will task subordinate echelon field commanders with the establishment and implementation of supporting diversity action plans. The plan's performance measures will result in leadership transparency and help ensure compliance. The plan also requires senior leadership's continued emphasis on the importance and urgency of diversity, and requires consistent communication to all levels of the service.

As a guiding document, the strategic plan sets clear and concise direction to better position Coast Guard leaders and staff to make optimal diversity-related decisions while we continue to modernize and realign our forces to meet current and future needs. The strategic goals outlined in this plan are target levels of performances driven by our cause for action, our mission, as well as our regulatory requirements in core competencies. Moving forward, our approach requires an annual review and revision while evaluating action plan progress on a quarterly basis to maintain focus and continuously monitor our goals.

We are confident the Committee will recognize the value of this plan. During previous hearings, Members of the Committee have asked ``What can we do to help?'' We ask for your continued support, interest, and involvement in executing our plan. You have helped us connect with local schools and communities we otherwise might not have reached.

You further challenged us to forge stronger ties and share best practices with our sister services. And, just yesterday, a New York Times article pointed out the Naval Academy's expanded urban recruiting effort started two years ago that helped to result in their banner year, and we hope our similar programs will prove the same. Lastly, you have participated in Coast Guard outreach events, conveying the dedication and importance of making increased diversity in service a reality.

While our strategy is being finalized, we are tracking our diversity initiatives through our tactical level diversity action plan. I will highlight some of the accomplishments to date. We have chartered an MD-715 Team to improve linkages between our civil rights and equal opportunity programs and all of our human resource efforts. These links are crucial to effective change in producing results, including gaps we have identified as needing closing.

Additionally, we redirected additional funding in fiscal year 2009 to enhance our diversity initiatives, enabling increased outreach to Native Alaskans, increased participation by minority officers, in national level affinity group conferences vitally important to career development and progression into senior ranks and leadership roles, increased outreach activities at historically Black colleges and universities through strengthened partnerships with the National Naval Officers Association and the creation of an ambassador's program.

We have just reprogrammed an O-6 captain billet to serve as a dedicated liaison to the national historically Black colleges and universities and predominantly Black institutions. This position, slated to be filled this summer, will improve the marketing effectiveness of several programs aimed towards increasing the diversity of our officer corps and our incoming Coast Guard Academy classes.

We continue to press forward in our enlisted and officer recruiting programs. To date, in 2009, 32 percent of our total enlisted ascensions are minorities. We have also experienced a 4.5 percent increase in women compared to the same period last year.

We have refocused our college student pre-commissioning initiative scholarship, CSPI, program to ensure greater

visibility at minority-serving institutions. CSPI has a proven record of attracting minority officer candidates and it is a success story. Of the current 42 candidates in the program, 48 percent are minority and 38 percent are female. Projected pool of applicants for this year is also shaping up to have the largest candidate pool of any CSPI selection panel we have ever convened. We expect between 60 and 70 applicants, and that is a significant increase over the 48 from last year.

We have recently hosted a landmark diversity forum a Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D.C. entitled Championing Diversity Leadership Roundtable. It was designed to bring together national leaders in the field of human resources and diversity.

Additionally, the Coast Guard Academy recently released their 2013 strategic plan focusing on diversity, leadership, and character development. A copy will be provided for the record. This plan states our goal is to increase under-represented minorities in the corps of cadets from our current 14.4 percent to 25 to 30 percent by 2015 and in faculty and staff by 2020. The incoming Class of 2013 currently has a total minority population of 15.5 percent, an increase from last year's 11.9 percent. We continue to sustain a strong female presence at the Academy, with more than 29 percent comprising the entering class, the highest of any service academy.

We are working diligently to embed sustainable strategies, actions, and outcomes for several years. We continue to invest in those programs and initiatives that will lead to increased diversity, including our Coast Guard Scholars Program, the Academy's one-year academic preparatory program. This year's incoming class contains 46 Coast Guard Academy Scholars, of which 43 percent are minority, and next year's prep class is estimated at 65 percent minority, including eight African American students who will make a strong contribution to the diverse composition of the Class of 2014.

The Academy Introduction Mission, known as AIM, has been revamped and reshaped to emphasize minority student attendance where their high school those students selected as AIM attendees are provided a fully funded one-week experience during the summer after junior year. We are optimistic the program will increase enrollment of African Americans and other minorities since nearly 50 percent of the Academy's incoming class are typically AIM graduates.

Mr. Chairman, we understand the only way to improve diversity at senior military levels is to grow it up through the ranks, and this takes some time. However, we are taking assertive actions to ensure our junior offices and enlisted personnel receive the coaching, the performance feedback, and mentoring necessary to advance in their chosen specialties. Since our testimony in April, we have implemented the plan change to our officer evaluation system and have also expanded the mandated use of individual development plans to help our newer members stay on track for success. An individual development plan is a roadmap for our personnel to reflect their goals and professional aspirations, with the help of their supervisors.

We have also reprogrammed base resources to send 210 members to participate in national level affinity conferences, which continue to prove incredibly powerful as career development tools. The mentoring and network opportunities created by the presence of our flag officers and senior executives at these conferences further enhances the long-lasting connection.

Mr. Chairman, as we previously testified, total workforce diversity is critically important to the Coast Guard. We view diversity as both mission relevant and an organizational

imperative. The Coast Guard needs the best talent our great Nation has to offer, and it translates into mission readiness and execution. The cause for action is evident. The demographics of our Nation are changing rapidly and the Coast Guard must be proactive and forward-leaning in our recruitment and retention efforts. We have established the metrics to achieve our workforce diversity goals.

In summary, we must continue to do all that we can to make certain every American is fully aware of the opportunities the Coast Guard has to offer and every American has full and equal access to those opportunities that is equally important as fostering, mentoring, and retaining our current workforce. With your continuing support, we will achieve our goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you very much.

First of all, I want to thank both of you for your testimony. I want to go to you just very briefly, Admiral. Well, really, both of you.

I remember one time I had a PR person in my office, but we weren't getting very much PR, so I went to him and I said we are not getting very much PR, I don't know what is going on here, and he said, well, I am doing this and I am doing that and I am doing this and I am doing that, and I said, you have been doing this for years now and you have got to produce or you don't have a job.

I think what I am getting at is that we have got to put these efforts in to motion. I know some of them are in motion, but we have got to produce and we have got to see results. And when I look at the Academy's record, it is a painful sight, and I don't say that lightly. And the reason why I wanted the Naval Academy to come through here is because I keep hearing people not necessarily in the Coast Guard, but overall, when people cannot find or cannot get to levels of diversity that reflect our society, quite often they say, pretty much, it can't be done, and I want to make sure that people understand it can be done and that we have to direct our efforts in a way where it is most productive.

And at the end of the day, as strange as this may sound, it is not something that I believe in very strongly, we only have a short time on this earth, and I believe that I want that little boy, that white boy in Roanoke, Virginia, I want him to have a chance to be in the Coast Guard, and I want that African American in San Francisco to have a chance if they are qualified. So it is not about color and all that; it is about just reflecting our society, and it is a reflection of the fact that all of our society is paying taxes to create these institutions, and I would just like to see the participation of a cross section of our society.

Ms. Dickerson, you have stated that only full-time civil rights service providers will advise the Coast Guard personnel on the EEO rights and responsibilities. You further indicate that all civil rights service providers will report to the Office of Civil Rights. When will this change be implemented and do you have enough full-time civil rights service providers in place now to achieve your projected coverage ratio of one full-time civil rights service provide per 1,000 employees? If you don't have enough personnel to achieve that coverage ratio, when do you anticipate it will be achieved?

Ms. Dickerson. Sir, the President's fiscal year 2010 budget for Coast Guard contains a request for four additional billets in the Office of Civil Rights Program. We are currently undergoing a manpower requirements analysis later this year. We, in our office, thought that the ratio, because of the relatively low number of complaints and the way our personnel

are situated of 1,000 to 1 was about right-sized for the Civil Rights Program, and the manpower requirements analysis will validate that number for us. We will get the results of that analysis at the end of 9/30, September 30th is our target date for receiving that report, and we will act on the subsequent request thereafter and program any additional billets that we need from that analysis.

As to the restructuring, sir, all of the authorization are signed off on and, as I mentioned, the unions have been notified, and there may be opportunity to bargain. Ten bargain unit employees are involved in the civil rights chain, so we will have to undergo that process, and as soon as all of those clearances have been received, we will be staged to go to the centralized structure.

Mr. Cummings. You said that you were able to complete, I think you said, 29 of the 53 recommendations of the Booz Allen Hamilton report?

Ms. Dickerson. That is right.

Mr. Cummings. When do you expect to have the rest of them done?

Ms. Dickerson. Almost all of them are scheduled for completion by the end of the fiscal year, and there are just a number of others that are programmed for completion by the end of October.

Mr. Cummings. And would you provide us with a timetable, not a timetable, but let me know when you expect to have these done? And just like I asked you, at the last hearing, when you expected to have the six employees, you gave me a date and I gave you a week or two more, I will give you two weeks after you say. Then we are going to check back with you to make sure that they have been done. It is not that we don't trust you; it is just that we want to make sure we have accountability.

Ms. Dickerson. Yes.

Mr. Cummings. Were you about to say something?

Ms. Dickerson. May I submit that for the record? I would look at the 29. I do believe our last completion date is October 31 time frame.

[Information follows:]

[GRAPHIC] [TIFF OMITTED] T0631.013

Mr. Cummings. Well, what I am saying is that if you have things are going to be completed, say, for example, if you have something that is going to be completed at the end of August, I want to know that because I want to hold you to that and I want to make sure that that is done as soon as it can be done, because people's lives are hanging in the balance here.

Ms. Dickerson. Absolutely.

Mr. Cummings. So you follow me?

Ms. Dickerson. Yes.

Mr. Cummings. So, in other words, whatever it is you are going to get done, I want dates for those things; I don't want to just wait until the end. So that is what I want. That is the document that I want. So you want to wait and submit that?

Ms. Dickerson. I believe we submitted it prior to, but I certainly can resend it.

Mr. Cummings. Okay.

Ms. Dickerson. I was under the impression we had, but if we have not, I certainly will get this to you right after the hearing.

Mr. Cummings. All right, that will be fine.

Mr. LoBiondo.

Mr. LoBiondo. Yes, Mr. Chairman. Let me apologize; I had a meeting with an Air Force general that we could not get rescheduled, and that is why I was absent from the hearing. You had asked some of the questions I had asked.

I am not sure if you did ask-- of the 53 recommendations that were made in the report, how many the Coast Guard has fully addressed at this point. Did you cover that?

Ms. Dickerson. Yes.

Mr. LoBiondo. You did, okay. Well, I will get it from the record.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Cummings. I have a series of questions, so I am going to you, Ms. Dickerson, again. You filled six of the new positions assigned to the OCR, is that right?

Ms. Dickerson. That is right.

Mr. Cummings. And there is still one person who hasn't started?

Ms. Dickerson. That person starts next week.

Mr. Cummings. And what will these people be doing? Just generally. Do they all do the same thing?

Ms. Dickerson. No.

Mr. Cummings. Okay.

Ms. Dickerson. As you know, we took on final agency decision writing for military complaints, so one of them is a final agency decision writer, an attorney, who will be in our office; we also have a support person in our office; and then four were programmed to the field based on the population of personnel that they will be delivering EEO services to.

So one went to our seventh district in Florida, one went to our eighth district in New Orleans, one went to our ninth district in Cleveland, and Virginia was the other location, yes, Portsmouth, Virginia was our fourth person, we placed a fourth person; and these will be delivering civil rights services on a full-time basis.

Mr. Cummings. Now, the Booz Allen report stated that within each field command, the commanding officer is considered to be the senior EEO officer for the particular command. What will be the role of the commanding officer of field commands in the Civil Rights Service provision processing forward?

Ms. Dickerson. Going forward, we have taken the collateral duty civil rights officer and eliminated that function across the board. As I reported in April, there were about 400 collateral duty personnel situated in local units all across the world, really, across Coast Guard, and the opportunity to delivery training to that ever-evolving cadre of people and policy changes, and to get performance feedback, or to even give it, was just not workable. So we have programmed a lot of those functions and they will be going to the XO, which is the executive officer, at those units. Every unit has one.

So we will be delivering training to them through XO conferences, and also we will be giving them work tools. One of the main things that Admiral Allen and Admiral Crea wanted to make sure that we had was 24-by-7 coverage so that people could raise civil rights concern even if they were in an underway status on a ship. So we have added an 800 number whereby those commanding officers and executive officers can access a full-time civil rights specialist when something occurs.

And the reason that we programmed it to that position is that the XO is the one who can break the communication silence and access a satellite telephone for someone who is experiencing a problem perhaps on a ship underway, for example, maybe in a harassment situation. That phone will be staffed 24-by-7 by military personnel, and if they don't answer the phone it rings on my personal cell phone. So we have added that element to make sure that we are not missing any opportunity to deliver services.

Other of the collateral duty roles that were with those 400 are now being reprogrammed to the full-time civil rights personnel.

Mr. Cummings. Now, when you say services, are you including counseling?

Ms. Dickerson. Yes.

Mr. Cummings. Okay.

All right, we are going to have to break, unfortunately, because we have a vote, three votes. We will be back here in about a half an hour. Sorry.

We are in recess.

[Recess.]

Mr. Cummings. The hearing is called back into order.

Admiral Pearson, the Academy's strategic plan says that one of your goals is ``cultivating a community of inclusion.'' One of the action items that you intend to undertake in support of that goal is to further diversity within the corps of cadets, faculty staff, and curriculum, including achieving a critical mass between 25 percent and 30 percent of the under-represented minority cadets at the Academy by 2015.

Given that minorities are projected to comprise only approximately 15 percent of the incoming Class of 2013, what specific steps do you plan to take to increase the percentage of minorities by approximately 10 percent or more over the next six years? What specific recruiting efforts will be initiated and what are your target goals for the Class of 2014, for which you are now recruiting?

Admiral Pearson. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The approach is to do an extensive awareness campaign, as well as outreach. We have already begun to get into different market areas than we had previously been, including communities of under-represented minorities, as well as specific schools. And I mentioned in my opening statement about programs that we have altered the Academy introduction mission AIM and how we are going to use that as basically a scholarship item to fund the travel for a particular potential student to travel from wherever his or her home area might be to the Academy to have that experience in their summer.

But basically the answer is an extensive awareness and recruiting campaign, as well as I think an extraordinarily important part of the entire approach is the Scholars Program. Those individuals that need a little bit more academic preparation we are sending to the New Mexico Military Institute or Marion Military Institute in Alabama for one year academic additional preparation. That has proven to be very successful over the past few years, and particular this year quite a number of our appointments were through the Scholars Program. We are expanding that.

Also, I think not only does the Scholars Program aid in the admissions process, but obviously we are concerned of the success while at the Academy after admission, so with that preparation at the Scholars Program, it greatly enhances a cadet's ability to complete the four years of instruction and then, obviously, through commissioning and off onto their career.

Mr. Cummings. At the most recent meeting of the Naval Academy Board of Visitors, they had a young lady from their recruitment team to come up. I think she was a graduate of the Academy, but one of the things that she said was that apparently it is a small office, but she said that they were very, very much committed to going everywhere they had to go in communities that so often never see a Navy recruiter, a Naval Academy recruiter, but that they were willing to go the extra mile.

And it was clear from her enthusiasm that this was something that she was truly committed to, and I was just wondering what kind of recruitment office do we have? Do we have graduates of the Academy going out there to do that

recruiting? This was a young woman, so she could kind of relate to these young people, and I have often said that we always talk about negative peer pressure with our young people. We need to go back to something called positive peer pressure. I was just wondering who is doing the recruiting with regard to graduates and recent graduates.

Admiral Pearson. Yes, Mr. Chairman. And I particularly support the point of someone closer to the individual target audience's age and can take the experience that they have received in the Coast Guard. Not all of our recruiters are going to be Academy graduates, but obviously that has an additional credibility that they can speak to their experience while at the Academy. Some of our junior officers that we are using in our recruiting efforts might be through OCS, and, again, the example of the CSPI program that I talked about earlier.

But it is very important, as I am sure our counterparts at the Naval Academy would say, that the message is important, as well as the messenger. So while we have senior officers involved in some of our outreach programs, again, to some of the HBCUs, we recognize that we need to have more junior officers closer in the age and experiential level to the individuals that we are trying to recruit, so absolutely, sir.

Mr. Cummings. One of the things that is very important, too, is mentoring. What happens too often is that a lot of people don't realize it, but if a young person feels that they are not--not necessarily a young person. If an older person feels that they are not going to be comfortable and they qualify to do so many other things, they ask themselves why would I go to a place where I am not going to feel comfortable, although it is free tuition? I am just wondering what are we doing with regard to mentoring.

Admiral Pearson. We have embarked upon a rather extensive mentoring program using organizations like the National Naval Officers Association for both Coast Guard officers, as well as the other sea service officers, and reaching out to our junior officers that are already within the service, but also using some of their what we call our ambassador program of reaching into the target audience that we are trying to recruit.

Mr. Cummings. You wrote in your testimony that the Coast Guard Academy Scholars Program also presents our greatest opportunity for pulling students from unrepresented minority populations to the Academy, as over 50 percent of students in the Scholars Program represent these populations. Those are your words. Now the Scholars Program is a program through which you send applicants to the Coast Guard Academy to a year preparatory school at another military institution. That is what it is, right?

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir. The Scholars Program involves the New Mexico Military Institute and Marion Military Institute, and you are correct, sir, for one year of additional academic preparation.

Mr. Cummings. So what is interesting, Admiral, is that every time we seem to mention African Americans at the Academy, the first thing the Coast Guard comes back with is their AIM program and prep school or college, junior college situation. There are many students who don't need that.

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cummings. And who can do fine; we have just got to get them interested, get them in, get them to apply, and then do what we have to do to keep them interested so they graduate. So why is sending minority students to preparatory school your best opportunity to bring more minorities into the Academy? And don't get me wrong, I am not knocking the preparatory school. I just think that sometimes we can go in--let me just share this

with you.

When my daughter went to private school years ago, everybody thought she was there on a scholarship because of her color, and they wanted to give her some general math and all the African American young ladies--it was an all girls school--they wanted to take all of them and put them in this general math. Well, that kind of concerned her and it was one of the only times that I did not become upset with her when she did something like that, she missed school because she stormed out in protest with the other young ladies because she knew she was better than that and she thought it was unfair. And I am just wondering.

Sometimes I think we can have some assumptions, and when I see this as a part of your testimony, I am just wondering if there is an assumption here that they are not African American kids and a lot of them, by the way, who may not even need a prep school. So if we assume that they all need the prep school, then here are certain groups of people you don't even go after.

I go to the graduations this time of year almost every week and see kids that are going to Harvard and Yale, and brilliant kids with SATs off the charts. I want to get some of those kids, young people, into the Coast Guard Academy, and I want to get them in so that they will be a part of the pipeline. I want to get them in there so that other young people will say well, Joe, who could have gone to Harvard, he went to the Coast Guard; maybe I want to go to the Coast Guard Academy.

Any comments?

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir. I agree with you, the Scholars Program is not necessarily focused upon under-represented minorities, but it is, of course, a resource available to any that need the additional academic preparation; and I think part of what I took your comments to be, as far as students who are already academically qualified and prepared to go into the Coast Guard Academy, we need to find those areas, the schools, and focus our recruiting efforts in those areas.

I think we have had a comparatively limited recruiting effort for the Coast Guard Academy, and that is one of the areas that we really need to expand into, the markets where we are going to be able to locate and attract the individuals that are ready for the Academy at that point.

I also take your point, sir, that we would love to have, obviously, an individual choose the Coast Guard Academy over the Harvards or the ivy leagues, and I think part of that is not only trying to focus on individuals in perhaps their junior year or the summer after their junior year, but start to progress that clock backwards and find some attraction at even a sophomore year in high school or a freshman year in high school.

I think there is also perhaps a cascading event that individuals who have someone that they looked up to, perhaps in their high school or their brother or sister who has gone to the Coast Guard Academy and convey that positive message back to the school, the community, the home front I think is also a powerful message that we have to send.

So the key is exactly finding the areas where we need to expend our recruiting effort, our recruiting capital, if you will, and focus in on those and find the students. Obviously, I would continue to support the Scholars Program, but I take your point absolutely that we need to focus in on those who are graduating from high school ``this year'' and, if they are academically qualified and otherwise prepared, we want to find them and leverage that.

Mr. Cummings. Mr. LoBiondo.

Mr. LoBiondo. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I was wondering if the Coast Guard Academy staff consults with their counterparts at the other service academies to share information on their respective recruiting efforts and successes that they may have had. Have you done that?

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir. The acronym is COSA, Chiefs of Service Academies, and our superintendent, Rear Admiral Burhoe, does participate in those. I believe that the staffs participate with their counterparts as well. But from the Chiefs of the Service Academies there have been discussions about recruiting efforts, and I think that is a powerful tool, particularly from our standpoint, and I guess being just a little bit selfish of where we can find those lessons learned from the other service academies and where they are having success and how we could translate those over to the Coast Guard Academy and our efforts. So I am particularly also looking forward to the secondary panel with the Naval Academy and, again, find and explore deeper in some of their best practices and how we can perhaps copy those over to our institution.

Mr. LoBiondo. It has come to our attention somewhat recently that there are discrepancies in the Coast Guard with quality of life issues compared to other branches of the military, and we are going to make an attempt to deal with that. I am curious, with recruiting resources, does the Coast Guard Academy have the same recruiting resources as the other academies, or how do you compare with the other academies when it comes to your resources to recruit?

Admiral Pearson. I don't have a specific answer. I would say that I would suspect it was smaller simply because we are a smaller institution, but I would have to provide an exact comparison for the record, if that would be acceptable, sir.

Mr. LoBiondo. Well, I guess what I am after is, I would understand if it would be smaller, but is it proportionate? Are we disproportionately smaller I guess is what I am getting at. I understand you don't have that information, but if you could get back to us, because, Mr. Chairman, that might be a part of the problem that has been consistent with how we have seen the Coast Guard treated in other areas that might be able to help out in this area. So thank you very much.

Admiral Pearson. Yes. And we will provide that for the record, sir.

[Information follows:]

[GRAPHIC] [TIFF OMITTED] T0631.014

[GRAPHIC] [TIFF OMITTED] T0631.015

Mr. LoBiondo. Thank you.

Mr. Cummings. Admiral Pearson, I have a chart showing application and appointment data to the Coast Guard Academy for several years. It is up here on the board. I guess it is kind of hard to see, but you are familiar with that, right?

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir, I am familiar with it.

Mr. Cummings. The Coast Guard did not provide the numbers for the chart to show how many Hispanics and African Americans actually completed application for the Classes of 2008 through 2012. Similarly, the Coast Guard Academy apparently did not track the number of Native Americans or Asians or Pacific Islanders who started applications or were offered appointments for the Class of 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012. To me, this shows a lack of concern for actually tracking minorities at the Academy. Can you explain what the case is with regard to that?

Admiral Pearson. Mr. Chairman, it is difficult to see up there. I know that for the African American applications it is a comparatively smaller number of completed applications from the initiated applications. Is that what you are referring to,

sir?

Mr. Cummings. Here.

Admiral Pearson. Thank you. I would offer that those individuals who have started the applications but had not completed, the Coast Guard Academy does reach out to those individuals specifically to inquire as to whether we could continue to work with them to complete their applications.

Obviously, that becomes an extraordinary resource for them because I would contend that, for example, the Class of 2013, under 162 African Americans, that those individuals obviously are aware of the Coast Guard Academy and have some interest in attending the Academy. I would suspect that they probably have other competing institutions that they are interested in attending.

But if we could work more diligently with those 162, obviously, that becomes a significant opportunity for us. But, again, I would emphasize that we do, from the Academy Admissions Department, specifically reach out to every one of those.

Mr. Cummings. You know, one of the things that is a little bit disturbing about these charts is that when we look at completed applications, Class of 2009 for African Americans there were 55, Class of 2010 there were 52, Class of 2011 there were 39, Class of 2012 there were 37; and then we have the lowest number for African American completed applications, 35, for the Class of 2013. Can you explain that? Do you have any rationale for why that might happen?

Admiral Pearson. Of why the completed applications----

Mr. Cummings. In other words, why we are going down. We are going backwards. In other words, the numbers are coming down.

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir. I do recognize that and I don't have an explanation for it. But, again, I would offer that, and I think we both recognize the delta between the complete and the started applications is a large number that provides us an opportunity, even though we are reaching out to them, to try to either find the reason specifically in drilling into the data why we are losing them. If we have got an opportunity to change either the message or, again, the messenger, working with these young individuals to at least encourage them to continue the application process. But, no, sir, I don't have a specific reason for the trend.

Mr. Cummings. And we have had trouble nailing this number down. How many African Americans have accepted an appointment to the Coast Guard Academy for the Class of 2013?

Admiral Pearson. Oh, yes, sir, I know that there were a little bit of confusion because there has been a recent addition, if you will. You may have been provided with information that the Class of 2013 has five African Americans. It in fact is six. A young African American female just accepted her appointment this week; she had had some medical issues that were resolved.

Mr. Cummings. Now, the Navy has established a set of diversity benchmarks for the 2037 flag pool based on the anticipated demographics of society adjusted for anticipated graduates with science and technical degrees. Has the Coast Guard set goals for its 2037 flag pool? The Navy did. Have you all?

Admiral Pearson. No, Mr. Chairman, we have not. We have consistently stated that the Coast Guard ``needs to look like America'' and certainly reference the U.S. Census Bureau's projections, and that becomes our benchmark. In direct answer to your question, we have not set a quota for flag board in that area.

I would mention, though, again, that our diversity strategic plan that I mentioned in my oral opening statement,

that we are looking to finalize by 1 September, we are talking about leadership accountability, and I think that will certainly have bearing as we look to the future, sir.

Mr. Cummings. Now, the Superintendent of the Academy is Admiral J. Scott Burhoe, is that right?

Admiral Pearson. Yes, Mr. Chairman, that is correct.

Mr. Cummings. According to his biography on the Academy Web site, he began his assignment as Superintendent in January 2007, is that right?

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir, that is correct.

Mr. Cummings. The Director of Admissions at the Academy is Captain Susan Bibeau?

Admiral Pearson. Yes, Mr. Chairman, it is pronounced Bibeau, yes, sir.

Mr. Cummings. According to her biography on the Coast Guard Academy Web site, she has been in this assignment since July 2001. Is that correct?

Admiral Pearson. Mr. Chairman, I have to respond with input for the record. It has been a while. I don't recall.

[Information follows:]

[GRAPHIC] [TIFF OMITTED] T0631.016

Mr. Cummings. I can tell you it is right. It is correct. And why would you think she would have been there so long with these figures? I can tell you that if this was my office and I had the goals to have a diverse workforce, she wouldn't be there. She just wouldn't. It would go against everything I believe in.

And I am just wondering. Do you have any idea? Do we just leave people in positions to be leaving them there, when the numbers are going down, or is there an accountability problem from the top, or both? Do you understand the question?

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir, I understand the question.

Mr. Cummings. Okay.

Admiral Pearson. I don't have the rationale as to what particular bore on the decision for her to be extended in her existing position. I can provide that perhaps for the record.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you very much.

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cummings. Mr. LoBiondo.

Mr. LoBiondo. No other questions.

Mr. Cummings. Admiral Pearson, my staff was briefed on Monday that Captain Steve Bains has been designated as your liaison to the historically Black colleges and universities. When will he start his new position?

Admiral Pearson. Mr. Chairman, the decision on the assignment has not been made. He is a very appropriate high, fine candidate for that billet. I believe it has been advertised within our system for individuals to basically put in their request for assignment, and we are looking to have that billet filled this summer.

Mr. Cummings. And can you give us a date so we can--you know, we had this discussion last time when we talked about historically Black colleges and universities, and we said that there was a liaison for the historically--I forget the name--Hispanic colleges, which there are very few, and there are over 100 historically Black colleges, but there was no liaison. Something doesn't add up here. I am just curious, when do you expect--do you have a date coming up for that?

Admiral Pearson. Mr. Chairman, I don't have a date for the assignment, but I will tell you with all confidence that it will be in the very, very near term. I could get you a date and provide that for the record here shortly, sir. As I mentioned, the job is correctly being advertised and the process does not take very long after individuals have expressed an interest

before orders are issued on it.

Mr. Cummings. Why don't we just make a date, say September 1st?

Admiral Pearson. Oh, absolutely, sir. The orders would be issued well in advance of that. I can't imagine that it would be after the 15th of July.

Mr. Cummings. Okay. All right, August 1st.

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cummings. We will check back with you at that time.

Admiral Pearson, will the Coast Guard expand what are currently the very limited number of Junior Coast Guard ROTC programs and efforts? It seems like another way to be able to accomplish some of the things that you just talked about.

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman. We don't really have a ``ROTC program,'' but what we do have, as I mentioned earlier, we refer to it as CSPI, the College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative, and we are increasing our quotas in there and we have also changed that program to increase opportunities for participation by under-represented minorities.

Mr. Cummings. We are talking about high school kids now, right?

Admiral Pearson. Oh, I am sorry.

Mr. Cummings. I said Junior ROTC.

Admiral Pearson. Oh, I heard the ROTC part. I am sorry, sir.

Mr. Cummings. That may have been my voice. I apologize.

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir. Well, as far as the ROTC programs for high school students, we have the one in Florida, Miami metropolitan area, that we refer to as MAST. There has been some discussion about establishing another one in the Middle Atlantic region and, of course, it is not an ROTC program, but you are familiar with our initiative at MIA in Baltimore. We don't currently have plans for another ROTC high school program that I am aware of, sir.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you very much.

Ms. Dickerson, do you owe us anything else? I just want to make sure we get everything you promised us. I think you----

Ms. Dickerson. Not to my knowledge.

Mr. Cummings. Let me just say this to both of you. We just want to try to move this process along. We want to move the process along. We don't know how much time we have in these positions. We don't know how much time we will have to address these issues, but in the time we do have, we want to make a difference.

And there is some little boy, some young lady sitting out there wanting to, first of all, trying to dream, but they are not even exposed to the Coast Guard, so they don't even know to dream about the Coast Guard. Then there are others who are exposed, but because of various things that have actually come up in this hearing, they will never get in the Coast Guard, in a lifetime. And that person who could have contributed to the Coast Guard and to our Country, they will never have the chance; and that is very, very unfortunate.

I really believe that we can do better. I just believe our Country is greater than that, that we can do better.

Ms. Dickerson.

Ms. Dickerson. Sir, if I could just say I don't like excuses, and I don't want to offer you any at all. To the extent that we have passed, I am using that to inform us so that we don't make the same mistakes or get into the same inertia. I feel as though we have momentum. I appreciate your leadership very much in developing that momentum and sustaining it, and that of Admiral Allen's.

As you indicated, this is our watch. I hope not to be

transitioning. I hope to see this and shepherd this through to completion. I have a vision for how this can come about with regard to the civil rights program, and I intend to give it the full force of all my effort and background and training to make sure that we accomplish all of our goals and really strengthen our civil rights program once and for all.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you.

Yes, sir.

Admiral Pearson. Sir, let me add on, from a diversity standpoint and the Coast Guard Academy perspective as well, we certainly share your view and the views of the Committee, and honestly very much respect and appreciate the efforts that you and your staffs have put together with us. We share the same view. We recognize that we are not nearly where we want to be.

We also recognize that we are building some of the very important foundational elements right now and setting the goals and look to achieving them. Obviously, it is important for our service. It is not only an issue of the proper moral direction, but I think it is an operational imperative for the Coast Guard to further diversify from where we are. So again, sir, we share that goal and we are aggressively pursuing it.

Mr. Cummings. Last but not least, perhaps I have spent a lot of time talking about the things that we are not doing. Let me just say I think that we are definitely moving in the right direction, no doubt about it. I want to thank you for doing that. But now we have got to have results.

Admiral Pearson. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cummings. I hope that you will implant in the DNA of every cell of your brain what I talked about with my PR person. By the way, the response was I am doing this, I am doing that, I am doing this, I am doing this; and I said, well, basically, it is like treading water. I am trying to get you out in the deep water and you are treading water near the harbor, going nowhere fast. We can have a lot of efforts, but if it is not leading anywhere--it is nice to watch you tread water, but that is not getting us anywhere.

So that is why I am so interested in tracking progress. I think these charts need to be accurate. There is no reason why we shouldn't know exactly how many folks--white, women, Blacks, everybody--are going into these academies. The Academy is just a little bit bigger than maybe two high schools. Matter of fact, they have high schools bigger than the Academy in Baltimore, so we should be able to attract the numbers in a high school. So when I see issues of we can't even figure out how many people are even coming into the school of different races and whatever, that does concern me.

We spent, my staff and I, we had to try to figure out exactly how many folks of different races and whatever were in the Academy. There is something wrong with that picture. And you all have heard me talk many times about a culture of mediocrity. This Country cannot be all that it is supposed to be if we are caught up in a culture of mediocrity; it just can't.

Let me be quiet and move on to the next witness. Thank you all very much. Appreciate it.

Admiral Pearson. Thank you.

Ms. Dickerson. Thank you.

Mr. Cummings. We now welcome Mr. Stephen Latta, Dean of Admissions at the United States Naval Academy. Dean Latta, how are you?

Captain Latta. Doing well, sir.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you for being with us.

Admiral Pearson, I want to thank you for sticking around. I really mean that. I really appreciate that, because most times folks leave. But thank you for sticking around.

Dean Latta.

TESTIMONY OF STEPHEN B. LATTA, CAPTAIN, USN RETIRED, DEAN OF
ADMISSIONS, UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY

Captain Latta. Thank you, sir. Chairman Cummings and distinguished Members of the panel, it is my pleasure to have the opportunity to discuss the Naval Academy's efforts to improve diversity in the brigade of midshipmen. I first want to thank the Members of Congress, especially you, sir, for your ongoing support in both resources and helping us reach out to the Nation through your congressional districts.

The Naval Academy's efforts to diversify the brigade of midshipmen have been ongoing for a number of years. However, it is with the strong support of the Navy leadership and Vice Admiral Fowler's guidance as superintendent that we have made the greatest strides in the last three years. Improving diversity in the brigade of midshipmen is our number one priority, and there is strong cross-institutional support for doing so.

Our initial focus was to understand why we were not doing a better job in attracting young men and women of diverse backgrounds. With the self-analysis of our marketing programs and patterns, feedback from parents, many of our Blue and Gold Officers, our volunteer network, some of you in Congress and many others, we not surprisingly came to the conclusion a couple years ago that our biggest challenge was awareness. That is, many of the young men and women we were trying to attract to the Naval Academy simply did not know about us.

To reach these youth, their parents and their influencers, we felt we needed to radically change our approach. We decided initially to focus our efforts primarily on under-represented areas of the Country that had large diverse populations and the high performing schools with large diverse student bodies in each one. In each area and school we targeted, we tried to focus on developing strong personal relationships by maintaining close contact and looking for creative approaches that would gain confidence and support of local influencers and others. This is the same approach that is used much like our football coaches do when they go out on the road.

Supporting these efforts has been a concerted buildup of support networks such as our Blue and Gold Officer Programs, our alumni chapters, parents clubs, and building partnerships with many of the affinity groups such as National Society of Black Engineers. We have found support networks to be a force multiplier in many communities.

We also revamped and reoriented our marketing programs to be more attractive to minority students and focus earlier in their education, in our case, we thought as early as seventh grade. This led to the development of our first ever STEM program, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math program, in the summer, and several initiatives to invite groups of underclass students to various venues at the Naval Academy, including the recent dedication of the Wesley Brown Field House named for our first African American graduate.

We are constantly looking for new and creative ways to market ourselves nationwide, whether it is through the use of our musical groups, such as the gospel choir and our band, development of new videos such as those seen on ESPN during football games, or a comic book we call the graphic novel, we seek to brand ourselves in order to increase awareness.

There are many other efforts underway, and they appear to be paying dividends at a rate we did not expect them to do so early. As you stated, sir, both last year's class and the one that is about to enter the Naval Academy on the 1st of July

will be the most diverse ever. Supporting the incoming classes are the most diverse preparatory programs in our history, and our summer seminar program that just concluded yesterday included over 1,000 rising young senior minority students for the first time ever.

In closing, I would like to say that we have accomplished a lot in a relatively short period of time, but we really feel we have a lot of work to do. Awareness is a very important issue in many communities and among many groups, but we know that by remaining both proactive, persistent, and patient, we will continue to improve our efforts over time.

Thank you for all you have done to support us in these efforts, and thank you for this opportunity to discuss our progress to date. I am available to answer any questions you might have for me, sir.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you very much, Dean. Dean, tell us how are we doing with regard to women? When I go to the meetings, I see it seems like we are doing pretty good at the Naval Academy. How are we doing with regard to women?

Captain Latta. Yes, sir. We are expecting to bring about 20 percent of our incoming class this year who are going to be females. The overall application rate for females this year is about 22 percent of the overall applicant pool. That is an improvement over the last three to four years. In fact, about four years ago we were bringing about 15 percent of the class. We have improved it and the last three or four classes have been between 20 and 22 percent of the incoming class.

Mr. Cummings. Now, how many of the minorities that are admitted to the Academy in any given year have attended a preparatory program and how many are coming straight from high school?

Captain Latta. I cannot give you that exact number, but I will get the number for you and bring it in. But we are getting more direct from high school than we have, I do know that for sure. For the first time ever, for example, this incoming class, I have 55 of the 125 African Americans are coming direct from high school, and we have never had more than about 40 to 45 in a given class that have been able to come straight from high school. So it is improving and we do see that as we go out and work many of these schools that have very talented young men and women, that we are able to do a better job of getting those that can come straight from high school straight into the school.

Mr. Cummings. How many recruiters do you have specifically recruiting students to the Academy and where are they located across the Nation? How many are graduates of the Academy?

Captain Latta. Yes, sir. Currently, in my office, I have four diversity counselors who are dedicated toward our diversity efforts. We divide the Country into four different regions. Each one obviously covers a different region of the Country. In addition to those four, we have five officers stationed around the Country in different locales; one in New York, one in Atlanta, one in Houston, one in Chicago, and one in San Diego. Of those nine people whose specific job is to attract young men and women of diverse backgrounds, seven of them are Naval Academy graduates.

Mr. Cummings. And how are applications for admissions reviewed at the Academy? How many people review an application and how are final admission decisions made?

Captain Latta. We have an admissions board composed, in most years, between 13 to 15 people I expect next year we will have about 15 people. Every application that is submitted is prepared by one of the regional directors, that is a majority counselor or diversity counselor, and those are presented to our admissions board for review. The admissions board reviews

every application.

In a sense, even though they are prepared by one person, because we have an electronic process, every member of that board can view that application file as it is being briefed and in detail, and oftentimes there is a lot of I would say it is kind of like a debate at the admissions board, where they will talk about the attributes of the different person being presented, and then the board will make a decision on that particular person to their overall qualification; that includes whether that person ought to go to a preparatory program, maybe they should go to college for another year or they should be eligible for direct admission.

Mr. Cummings. And I understand that you have a chief diversity officer position at the Academy. Who fills that position, what is the position's responsibilities, and how many staff members work for that chief?

Captain Latta. Yes, sir. We have been working hard for about the last year and a half. In fact, the two gentlemen with me today, Mr. Joe Rubino initially was asked by the Superintendent to help bring that directorate along about a year and a half ago with a couple of--in fact, we had four people helping him at the time. Captain Tony Barnes, who is sitting behind me now, came in last September as we are continuing to mature that directorate, and we expect to have about 10 people assigned to it when we are done, but right now there are not that many in there, there are about five people.

Mr. Cummings. And what percentage of your incoming minority cadets participated in Junior ROTC, do you know?

Captain Latta. This year, I am anticipating about 16 to 17 percent of the incoming class; last year it was 20 percent.

Mr. Cummings. Mr. LoBiondo.

Mr. LoBiondo. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Latta, thank you for being here. Can you tell us how has the Academy's outreach efforts changed under your leadership? What are some things you can point to that you have changed since you have been there?

Captain Latta. I think probably the one thing is that there has been some philosophy changes. I worked in our admissions office for about four years because I became the Dean of Admissions, and I think even though we thought we were doing a good job in diversity, in reality, I think we were more focused on our brand name, that we are the Naval Academy and people should know about us.

But the realization that people don't know about us in many communities, in fact, I am a little bit embarrassed to say, a couple years ago, when we started doing more to reach out to some of the schools in some of the big cities, when I went up to Baltimore, there were some kids in some of the high schools there that didn't even know the Naval Academy was 30 miles away, and that really, I have to tell you, was kind of a sobering moment for me because I thought, boy, local kids ought to know where the local schools are.

But we decided that we weren't going to sit back any longer; we were going to go out and we were going to look for the good kids in these good schools. Part of it is a resource issue. We don't have a lot of people working specifically for this, so we just tried to do the best we could with what we have, and I think that is probably one of the big things.

The other thing is that I have encouraged every one of the folks that work in our office to look for a different approach in every school that they go to, because many of the schools, the traditional approaches that we have been using really have not worked. So, for example, we have some schools that are very technically focused. They were looking for help initially to help develop an aeronautical program in their school, so we use

that as an opportunity to link up one of our professors at the Naval Academy with the school, and part of that was to build that friendship, that partnership with the school to gain their trust and interest in us that we were there to help them out.

We have invited many of the students from some of these schools to come down and do overnight visits at the Naval Academy, and while they are there we give them an opportunity to visit and not only see the facilities and get presentations by the professors, but they get a chance to meet with the midshipmen who are closest in age to them, those who have shared experiences and that type of thing, so they start to see that this could be a place for them.

Probably another thing has been the use of our musical groups. The gospel choir in particular we have had greater flexibility with support of our superintendent to use those groups to get out and outreach in many of the communities. Wherever they travel, they draw big crowds and the kids in the high schools see these young men and women who are at the Naval Academy and they realize that that could be them. In other words, we are creating an opportunity for them to see that this could be them in that school doing that. Same thing with our bands who have developed repertoires that appeal to young men and women.

There are a number of other things and I can get more information for you on that.

Mr. LoBiondo. Thank you.

Mr. Cummings. Now, tell us about your STEM program. Tell us how the STEM program plays in what you are doing and your efforts, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

Captain Latta. Yes, sir. The STEM initiative came about mainly for a couple reasons. Number one, because we knew we were not doing a good job of attracting our youth at a younger age. Too often we were going to high schools in the senior year, looking for students who were getting ready for college.

And other schools--and I hate to say it--like ivy league schools and high tech schools that already had developed partnerships with the schools and the kids had already obligated to go to the schools before we ever got to them, so we felt that developing a STEM program was a way to increase awareness of the Naval Academy at a much earlier age.

The other part of it is we felt a civic responsibility in trying to do our part to encourage math and science preparation. Coincidentally, that is the type of thing we need to do for the kids that are coming to our school because we know it is a very technically oriented school. So if we can get to a kid in seventh, eighth, or ninth, or even tenth grade and say, hey, come to our STEM program and we will show you a lot about the Naval Academy, but we will also guide you in what you need to do to prepare for college, they will be better prepared for admission to a school like ours, even if they don't choose our school down the road.

Mr. Cummings. You have a summer seminar program also?

Captain Latta. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cummings. Talk about that.

Captain Latta. Probably we would call that our flagship program, but we completely reoriented that whole program with a focus on trying to improve representation for a lot of the under-represented congressional districts.

Mr. Cummings. What is the program?

Captain Latta. This program is for rising seniors, those coming out of the junior year into the senior year of high school. It is essentially a marketing program where these juniors going into their senior year come to the Naval Academy for a week. We have three one-week sessions in June. In fact, the last session, as I mentioned, just ended yesterday.

They room in Bancroft Hall, they form them up in platoons with midshipmen who just came out of their first year running them, and oversight from the seniors. They have an opportunity to go to academic workshops, tour the facilities, learn a little bit about physical education the way we teach it at the Naval Academy, and generally get an overall impression what the Naval Academy is all about.

So, again, I come back to the awareness issue. We thought that if we made the program bigger and we expanded it and made a more concerted effort to get into these areas where we weren't attracting young men and women, that we could do a better job of getting them interested in the Naval Academy. And the reason I say that is our track history has been if they come to summer seminar, two-thirds of the kids that come will follow through on their application the following year and complete the application for admission. That, to me, has been one of the big keys in improving diversity, because getting the kids to complete the application gives you a talent pool to work with that you can consider for an offer of appointment or preparatory program, what have you.

But when they come to the Naval Academy, they get sold and their parents, who often drop them off or will come and take tours of the Academy and get briefings by our staff and meet with other parents of midshipmen and candidates, the parents get sold on the program also. So it is a very powerful tool in marketing the Naval Academy and, as I said, we took a definite focus on trying to bring more kids in from the under-represented areas and we expanded the program out to be more inclusive.

Mr. Cummings. How do you do with regard to retention of minority young people? Certainly, it is nice to get folks in the door, but I would like to see them graduate.

Captain Latta. Yes, sir. We have worked real hard at the Naval Academy in general. In fact, the Class of 2009 that just graduated, the minority graduation rates were very similar to the overall graduation rates for the majority counterparts.

Mr. Cummings. And what is that?

Captain Latta. It is about 84.5 percent. I will get the exact numbers for the record for you, sir.

Mr. Cummings. You said 84.5 percent?

Captain Latta. About 84.5 percent. I will get the numbers for you. We have done a very good job over time. I think what has helped are several things: the institutional support in two areas. Number one is we have an academic center of fully staffed professors that is available for everybody, but it has also helped out with many of our minority midshipmen who have been struggling academically, to help them keep them on track and succeed at our school. In fact, their philosophy is really that if a young man or woman comes to our school and they are trying hard and they want to stay at the Naval Academy and they want to graduate, then we will take every resource available to try and help them succeed there.

The other thing we have done is we have put more emphasis on many of our mentoring group, minority mentoring groups, like National Society of Black Engineers; we had the Black Studies Club, Latin American Studies Club, Korean American Club, and those types of things, and have tried to provide more outlets for many of those young men and women to go study. If they don't want to do it in another group, they can do it with folks that come from their racial or ethnic background.

We have increased access to faculty members during the day, so if a student has an off period, they can go, for example, over to Chauvenet Hall, where we teach math, they can do in there and there is a prof in there that will have work problems on the board and that type of thing. But the overall idea is

that we are there to help them succeed, rather than help them fail.

Mr. Cummings. I want to thank you very much. We really appreciate your being with us. We encourage you--is this your last year?

Captain Latta. Sir?

Mr. Cummings. Are you getting ready to retire?

Captain Latta. I hope not.

[Laughter.]

Captain Latta. I hope that is not a clue.

Mr. Cummings. I just wanted to see if you were alert there.

Captain Latta. No, I am up for a contract renewal this year, but I hope to be around for a while. I have to tell you my personal experience is the more I am around many of these young men and women, the more I realize it is all about opportunity. As you stated last week, everybody on my staff, even though I have a small staff just dedicated toward the diversity effort, everybody on my staff is very impassioned about what they are doing and they are out actively looking for kids. They are mentoring.

I go home most nights between 6:30 and 7:00 at night, and half of my lieutenants are still there on the phone talking to their kids and their parents. They are there on weekends helping to guide tours and do other things, and they travel a lot, too. I don't know how they all do it, because they are supposed to be on what the Navy calls shore duty, where they get a little time off after being at sea for a while. But they look at this as their mantra and their legacy to give back to the Academy for having had the opportunity to graduate.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you very much.

Captain Latta. Yes, sir.

Mr. Cummings. This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:44 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

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